

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5724

INFO AMEMBASSYMADRID732

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SS, AG, PFOR

SUBJECT: SAHARA ROUNDUP -- ON THE TRAIL OF THE SPECIAL SUMMIT

1. ALGERIAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTING THEMES OF SPECIAL SUMMIT, POLISARIO GENERAL MILITARY OFFENSIVE NOT ONLY IN SAHARA BUT ALSO IN MAURITANIA AND MOROCCO, AND MOROCCAN REPRESSION.

2. ALGERIANS HAVE NOT LET THEIR APPARENT FAILURE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING SPECIAL SUMMIT CALL (ADDIS 113) INTERFERE WITH THEIR PRESS PRESENTATION OF ISSUE. HIGHLIGHT HAS BEEN SDAR FOREIGN MINISTER HAKIM IBRAHIM'S TRAVEL TO ADDIS ABABA AND PORT LOUIS IN SEARCH OF SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL SUMMIT. FOLLOWING MEETING WITH OAU SEC GEN ETEKI IN ADDIS, HAKIM IBRAHIM 5 JANUARY CLAIMED TO HAVE RECEIVED "VERY POSITIVE ASSURANCES" ON SUMMIT. HE ADDED THAT SOVIET UNION "HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND OF FIGHTING PEOPLES. AS FOR THE UNITED STATES, WHICH PREVIOUSLY LIVED UNDER THE YOKE OF COLONIALISM, IT EQUALLY HAS A ROLE IN PLAY IN

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SUPPORTING CAUSE OF LIBERTY IN WESTERN SAHARA". HAKIM IBRAHIM WENT ON TO PORT LOUIS TO CONFER WITH OAU PRESIDENT RAMGOLAAM. SINCE HIS ADDIS VISIT, PRESS HAS BEEN FULL OF PHRASE "ON THE EVE OF THE SPECIAL SUMMIT". OTHER SDAR EMISSARIES REPORTED IN BRAZZAVILLE AND PARIS.

3. LENGTHY INTERPRETATIVE ARTICLE 9 JANUARY ON POLISARIO

AFFIRMED THESIS THAT SINCE THIRD POLISARIO CONGRESS IN AUGUST POLISARIO HAS PASSED FROM DEFENSIVE STAGE OF PRESERVING SAHRAOUI HUMAN POTENTIAL TO OFFENSIVE STAGE. RESULT, ACCORDING ARTICLE, IS THAT POLISARIO NOW MASTERS OF MAJOR PART OF TERRITORY AND MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN INVASION FORCES HOLD UP IN MAJOR CITIES. SDAR INFORMATION MINISTER SALEM OULD SALEK CLAIMED THAT "MOROCCAN EXPANSIONISM IS AIMED AS MUCH AT MAURITANIAN PEOPLE AS AT SAHRAOUI PEOPLE" AND THAT POLISARIO NOW "FIGHTING MOROCCAN ARMY IN MAURITANIA". PRESS REPORTS OF CURRENT OFFENSIVE, CODE-NAMED "THE EL OUALI OFFENSIVE", CITES BATTLES AT ZAG, FOUM EL HASSANET, GUELTA ZEMMOUR, METTLANI, BIR MOGHREIN, FARSIA, OUALATA, TICHELT AND AIM BENTILI. ACCORDING TO SDAR DEFENSE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN FIGHTING AT BIR MOGHREIN KILLED CAPTAIN ABDELKRIM KHATTABI, ALLEGED "CHIEF OF MOROCCAN FORCES IN SMARA".

4. CASABLANCA TRIAL OF 178 "MAHGREB PATRIOTS" AND MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN "CONCENTRATION CAMPS" IN SAHARA COMPLETE PRESS DOSSIER.

5. ONLY POTENTIAL BRIGHT SPOT WAS 8 JANUARY MEETING BETWEEN GOA FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA WITH SAUDI AMBASSADOR. THIS FIRST KNOWN MEETING OF BOUTEFLIKA WITH ANY AMBASSADOR IN OVER THREE YEARS. OBSERVERS HERE LOOKING ON THIS AS CONCILIATORY BOUTEFLIKA GESTURE FOR HAVING TORPEDOED SAUDI INITIATIVE AND AS POSSIBLE INDICATION THERE MAY BE SOME LIFE LEFT IN IT, BUT THIS ALL SPECULATION AND SAUDI AMBASSADOR CLOSE-MOUTHED.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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